

Message Text

SECRET

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SECTO 8128

NODIS CHEROKEE

WHITE HOUSE FOR THE PRESIDENT AND DR. BRZEZINSKI ONLY

STATE FOR WARREN CHRISTOPHER AND PETER TARNOFF ONLY

FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGIN

1. MY 2-1/2 HOUR MEETING THIS MORNING WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND HIS MINITERIAL NEGOTIATING TEAM TOOK PLACE AGAINST THE EMOTIONAL BACKGROUND RESULTING FROM PUBLICITY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE PLO WILL ACCEPT WITH RESERVATIONS RESOLUTION 242 AND THAT WE WILL THEN ENTER OFFICIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH IT. THIS WAS THE PRINCIPAL THEME OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S TOAST AT DINNER LAST NIGHT, WHICH VERGED ON THE DEMOGOGIC AND IN WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE CALLED THE PLO COVENANT AN ARAB "MEIN KAMPF." IN OUR MEETING TODAY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ANY PLO STATEMENT WOULD NOT CHANGE THE REALITY THAT THEIR GOAL IS ISRAEL'S DESTRUCTION. HE SAID IT WOULD BE A SAD DAY WHEN AMERICAN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES SAT DOWN AND TALKED TO THE PLO, AND HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD RECONSIDER. I TOLD HIM AFTER THE MEETING THAT I PLANNED TO
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SAY AT MY PRESS CONFERENCE WHAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY SAID, I.E., THAT WE WOULD TALK TO THE PLO IF THEY STATED CLEARLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THEY ACCEPTED 242 AND THUS ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO ASKED ME TO RAISE AGAIN WITH YOU HIS REQUEST THAT, IN OUR FUTURE PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH THE

ARABS, WE NOT RECONFIRM OUR POSITION THAT WE ENVISAGE A TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT ALONG THE 1967 BORDERS WITH MINOR MODIFICATIONS. I TOLD HIM I WOULD REPORT THIS REQUEST TO YOU. AT THE SAME TIME, I REITERATED THE POSITION YOU TOOK IN YOUR REPLY TO HIS LETTER ON THIS SUBJECT, SAYING WE FELT STRONGLY IT WOULD BE IMMORAL FOR US TO EQUIVOCATE IF WE WERE ASKED BY THE ARABS IF OUR POSITION HAD CHANGED. I TOLD HIM THIS QUESTION HAD BEEN PUT TO US IN EVERY ARAB CAPITAL, AND THAT I HAD CONFIRMED THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN OUR POSITION.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE FOREGOING, BEGIN AND HIS COLLEAGUES RAISED THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS DURING OUR MEETING TODAY:

A. LEBANON. WE WERE GIVEN A MILITARY BRIEFING ON THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, WITH EMPHASIS ON ISRAEL'S TWO OBJECTIVES OF PREVENTING THE PLO FROM ESTABLISHING ITSELF IN WAYS THAT AGAIN THREATENED ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDER, AND OF PROTECTING THE CHRISTIANS IN THE SOUTH. THE BRIEFING BROUGHT OUT THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN ANY SUDDEN CHANGE IN THE SITUATION OF THE CHRISTIANS BUT RATHER A CUMULATIVE DETERIORATION IN THEIR POSITION AND THEIR MORALE. BEGIN SAID THAT ISRAEL HAS NO DESIGNS ON LEBANESE TERRITORY AND WOULD CONFRONT US WITH NO SURPRISES. HE DID NOT INDICATE THAT ISRAEL WAS CONSIDERING EARLY MILITARY ACTION, BUT THE WHOLE THRUST OF THIS BRIEFING WAS THAT ISRAEL MIGHT WELL HAVE TO TAKE SUCH ACTION AT SOME POINT. I SHALL BE SENDING YOU A SEPARATE CABLE ON
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THIS MATTER, AS WELL AS ON ISRAELI THINKING ABOUT THE DISPOSITION OF ANY UN FORCES IN SOUTH LEBANON. THE ISRAELIS BELIEVE THAT THE BEST SOLUTION IS FOR LEBANESE ARMY UNITS TO BE STATIONED IN THE SOUTH BUT THAT UN FORCES, IF ANY, COULD FILL THE VACUUM IN THE INTERIM. I AGREED TO RAISE WITH ASSAD THE QUESTION OF RESTRAINING THE PLO IN THE SOUTH AND OF NOT DISARMING THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN VILLAGES, WHICH BEGIN SAID WAS THE SYRIAN INTENTION.

B. MILITARY ASSISTANCE. AT BEGIN'S REQUEST, DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN AND CHIEF OF STAFF GUR REVIEWED ISRAEL'S MILITARY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS. THEY MADE NO NEW REQUESTS BUT EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DECISIONS ON THEIR OUTSTANDING REQUESTS, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR THE PURCHASE AND CO-PRODUCTION OF THE F-16 SO THAT DELIVERIES CAN BEGIN IN 1980. THEY ALSO RAISED, AS A SUBJECT THEY WILL WANT TO PURSUE WITH US IN GREATER DETAIL, THE NEED FOR ASSISTANCE TO KEEP THEIR DOMESTIC ARMS (PARTICULARLY AIRCRAFT) INDUSTRY VIABLE INCLUDING THE NEED FOR INCREASING THEIR EXPORTS. FINALLY, THEY RENEWED THEIR REQUEST THAT OUR LEVEL OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR ARMS PURCHASES BE RAISED FROM \$1 BILLION TO \$1.5 BILLION ANNUALLY.

C. ARMS SALES TO ARABS. THE DEFENSE MINISTER REVIEWED IN FAMILIAR TERMS ISRAEL'S CONCERN ABOUT THE CONTINUING BUILD-UP OF ARMS IN ALL THE ARAB STATES. HE STRESSED IN PARTICULAR, HOWEVER, THE THREAT ISRAEL SEES FROM THE CONSTRUCTION OF AIR BASES IN NORTHERN SAUDI ARABIA AND SAUDI PLANS TO EXPAND ITS NAVY, ON BOTH OF WHICH PROJECTS WE ARE ASSISTING THE SAUDIS. HE ALSO SINGLED OUT FOR CONCERN WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE EXPANSION OF EGYPT'S MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD ENABLE EGYPT TO ABSORB QUICKLY AND UTILIZE AMERICAN EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN AS WELL AS SOVIET EQUIPMENT IN LIBYA.

D. SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. AT BEGIN'S REQUEST,
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THE ISRAELI ATTORNEY GENERAL READ A MEMORANDUM DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH THAT, CONTRARY TO OUR CONTENTION, ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ARE NOT ILLEGAL UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER WE HAVE A LONG-STANDING DIFFERENT LEGAL CONCLUSION.

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ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 SECTO 8128

NODIS CHEROKEE

WHITE HOUSE FOR THE PRESIDENT AND DR. BRZEZINSKI ONLY

STATE FOR WARREN CHRISTOPHER AND PETER TARNOFF ONLY

FROM THE SECRETARY

E. WEST BANK PALESTINIANS. FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN DEVELOPED AT SOME LENGTH HIS CONCEPT OF WAYS IN WHICH ISRAELIS AND ARABS CAN CO-EXIST IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, WITH ISRAEL MAINTAINING ITS MILITARY POSITION THERE WHILE GIVING THE ARAB POPULATION GREATER AUTONOMY AND OFFERING THOSE WHO WISHED IT THE OPTION OF ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP. DAYAN ALSO DISCUSSED THE NEED TO BEGIN GIVING ACTIVE CONSIDERATION TO RESETTLING THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES WHERE THEY PRESENTLY RESIDE. IN HIS VIEW, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO BEGIN DISCUSSING THIS PROBLEM EVEN PRIOR TO A GENEVA CONFERENCE. I TOLD HIM I DOUBTED THE ARABS WOULD BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THIS SUBJECT IN ISOLATION IN A STRUCTURED WAY BUT THAT IT MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THE TALKS WE PROPOSE INITIATING ON A RANGE OF PEACE SETTLEMENT PROBLEMS WHEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS COME TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NEXT MONTH.

F. EXTERNAL GUARANTEES. DAYAN ASKED WHETHER ANY OF THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAD RAISED THE QUESTION OF EXTERNAL GUARANTEES
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OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT AND WHETHER WE HAD MADE ANY COMMITMENTS IN THIS REGARD. I SAID THAT, AT BEGIN'S REQUEST, WE HAD NOT INCLUDED THE IDEA OF EXTERNAL GUARANTEES IN THE DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES. THE ARABS WITH WHOM I HAD TALKED, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT UN OR THIRD-PARTY GUARANTEES WOULD BE DESIRABLE ONCE A FINAL PEACE TREATY HAD BEEN REACHED, ALTHOUGH NONE OF THEM IS PRESSING THE IDEA AT THIS POINT. I SAID I THOUGHT THE US WOULD BE PREPARED TO JOIN A SYSTEM OF GUARANTEES IF THIS WERE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO COMPLETE A PEACE TREATY.

4. IN ADDITION TO MY MEETING TODAY WITH BEGIN AND HIS NEGOTIATING TEAM, I MET SEPARATELY WITH YIGAL YADIN, THE LEADER OF THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE, WHOSE NEGOTIATIONS WITH BEGIN FOR JOINING THE COALITION RECENTLY BROKE DOWN. I BRIEFED YADIN FOR HIS PRIVATE INFORMATION ON OUR DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND OUR ALTERNATIVES FOR PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS AND DESCRIBED TO HIM THE REACTIONS OF THE VARIOUS ARAB GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. YADIN CONFIRMED THAT ONE OF HIS DIFFERENCES WITH BEGIN WAS OVER THE QUESTION OF KEEPING OPEN THE OPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ARABS ON ALL FRONTS. YADIN SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION, BEGIN WILL NOT YIELD ANY GROUND WITH RESPECT TO THE WEST BANK. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE INTRODUCTION AT THIS STAGE OF THE PALESTINIAN ENTITY IDEA HAD GIVEN BEGIN A STRONG ISSUE DOMESTICALLY ON WHICH THERE IS A BROAD NEGATIVE CONSENSUS IN ISRAEL. WITH RESPECT TO HOW PEACE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT, YADIN SAID HE FAVORED BEGINNING WITH

EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI AND THEN SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY SUCH AGREEMENTS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT ON THE EASTERN FRONTS AS WELL. BY THUS PUTTING OFF THE PALESTINIAN-WEST BANK PROBLEM UNTIL LAST, IF AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED ON OTHER FRONTS, THIS WOULD
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PLACE THE BURDEN ON BEGIN TO MAKE CONCESSIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE WEST BANK. INJECTING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AT THE BEGINNING, HE SAID, HAD GIVEN BEGIN AN ISSUE ON WHICH HE WOULD WIN STRONG SUPPORT IN PUBLIC OPINION. YADIN MADE LCEAR THAT HE WAS ALSO AGAINST THE IDEA OF A PALESTINIAN ENTITY BUT WOULD FAVOR TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS ON THE WEST BANK TO JORDAN WHICH, IN HIS VIEW, SHOULD LOGICALLY BECOME A PALESTINIAN STATE. FINALLY, HE STATED FLATLY THAT A RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION AND THAT ANY ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEMILITARIZING WEST BANK TERRITORY RELINGQUISHED BY ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO BE SUPERVISED BY THE ISRAELIS.

5. I ALSO HAD A BRIEF BUT USEFUL DISCUSSION WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER PERES. HE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR OUR EFFORT TO REACH A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, LARGELY BECAUSE IT MAY DRAW THE ARABS OUT ON THE CONCEPT OF PEACE. BUT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES CAN BE SUFFICIENTLY NARROWED TO REACH A FINAL PEACE, AND THEREFORE EXPECTS THAT EVENTUALLY WE WILL TURN TO A PARTIAL ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT AND PERHAPS A STEP ON THE SYRIAN FRONT AS WELL. THE SAUDIS, HE FEELS, ARE PLAYING WITH FIRE IN SUPPORTING THE PLO SO STRONGLY, AND HUSSEIN MISJUDGES HIS POPULARITY ON THE WEST BANK IF HE BELIEVES HE CAN WIN A PLEBISCITE. IN CONCLUSION, HE SAID THAT ALL ISRAELIS AGREED ON THE POSITION OF NO RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS AND NO PALESTINIAN STATE. WE WILL BE SENDING A SEPARATE CABLE ON MY PRIVATE TALKS LATER IN THE DAY WITH BEGIN AND DAYAN AND WITH BEGIN ALONE.
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